DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 041 722 RE 002 933

TITLE	Early Reading Assistance: A Reading Tutorial Program.
INSTITUTION	Program for Action by Citizens in Education, Cleveland, Ohio.
PUB DATE	68
NOTE	29p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.55
DESCRIPTORS	Individualized Instruction, *Paraprofessional School Personnel, Parent Associations, *Parent Participation, Reading Instruction, *Remedial Reading, *Remedial Reading Programs, *Tutorial Programs, Tutoring, Volunteers

ABSTRACT

The Early Reading Assistance Program was developed and implemented by a nonprofit citizens organization (Programs for Action by Citizens in Education) funded by a Jennings Foundation Grant to provide tutorial reading assistance for children in 17 suburban Cleveland Public Schools. The volunteer tutors were mainly middle-aged, middle-class housewives with varied backgrounds. Scheduling of the tutoring sessions was quite strict and was patterned to provide 2 hours per week of individualized instruction for each child for a period of 13 weeks. This report describes in detail the implementation of the program, including organizing the overall program, selecting the children, recruiting and training volunteers, setting up the tutoring schedule, and evaluating the program. The plans to continue the program into a second year are also described. Tables report the data comparing tutored and control groups on reading achievement gain, attitudes toward reading, and behavioral changes as a result of tutoring. An interest inventory and sample evaluation forms are also included. (CM)

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Early Reading Assistance

A Reading Tutorial Program

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FORWARD

Early Reading Assistance (ERA) had its inception under the innovative guidance of Robert Jewell, former Executive Director of The PACE Association. His valued leadership and direction, together with his personal committment to quality education, contributed to the success of this program.

PACE is also indebted to the administrators, curriculum directors, and reading consultants of the participating school districts for their support and invaluable assistance. These school districts were: Bay Village, Berea, Cleveland, Cleveland Heights-University Heights, East Cleveland, Garfield Heights, Maple Heights, North Olmsted, Parma, Westlake, and the Cleveland Catholic Diocese.

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CHAPTER I

WHY ERA

The ultimate objective of The PACE Association, Program for Action by Citizens in Education, is to improve the quality of education for all students in the Greater Cleveland area. Since early 1963, we have been engaged in a variety of projects and activities designed to achieve that purpose.

The following report is a discussion and outline of our Early Reading Assistance program (ERA). If the modern urban problem socially is racial inequality and the modern urban problem economically is poverty, then the modern urban problem educationally is reading. These problems are highly interrelated, and certainly not mutually exclusive. The reading problem is not restricted to the urban poor child, but rather is no respecter of racial, social, or economic levels. Virtually every classroom in America, at every grade level, has children who read poorly or not at all. The "drop-out syndrome" begins very early in school life, even as soon as the first or second grade, and the child who cannot or will not read is definite drop-out material. There are presently those students in our schools today who, though physically present, have mentally dropped-out and turned-off the learning process. They are merely putting in time until old enough to leave school for good.

Why is reading so important? Simply because it is the one category of formal learning which holds the key to all others. Reading ability is the door through which all other knowledge must pass. Most people can function effectively in a complex, industrialized society with a weakness in some phase of learning. It is possible to "get by" without knowing too much history, without understanding algebra or geometry, without comprehending science, or without being able to sing or dance. But, if one cannot read, one cannot even "get by".

For a child, the inability to read turns a classroom into a nightmare. The older the child becomes, the more he is shut off from the activities of his classmates; he is daily embarrassed and often humiliated when he is called upon to read aloud and thus expose his ignorance to the scrutiny of his peers. He is bored, frustrated, often sullen, hostile and antisocial. In later life, illiteracy manifests itself in the inability to read street signs, puzzlement over written directions or read maps, and misunderstood warnings of toxic and dangerous materials.

PACE wanted to launch an effective attack on this overwhelming and all-pervasive educational problem. We began with some assumptions:

1. That the child with reading problems needs special attention in a non-competitive setting.
2. That the child with reading problems can be identified in school at an early age and given special help.

3. That additional personnel would be needed to accomplish meaningful results, and there are obviously not enough reading experts available.
4. That lay volunteers can be trained to provide a meaningful and beneficial service within the educational structure established by the school administration.
5. That a one-to-one relationship between the tutor and student is the key to a successful special-help program.

From these major assumptions and careful investigation grew the ERA program. It has been a successful program. It is an effective program and an adaptable one.

In presenting this handbook, we are attempting to convey the who, why, when, where and how of a volunteer remedial program. We will discuss the value of volunteers to education, summarize the pilot program (ERA-I) and its modifications and expansions into ERA-II, and present the organizational structure of the program.

ERA is a symptom of the beginning of the fight against illiteracy. Let the battle continue . . .

CHAPTER II

VOLUNTEERS IN EDUCATION

Every community has a vast untapped supply of capable, resourceful and talented citizens who could contribute much to quality education. The retired teacher or businessman, the efficient housewife, the socially-conscious teen-ager, the civic-minded citizen . . . all have a common bond, the desire to give and the need to be needed.

Conversely, every community and school system must be aware of the vital contribution the trained volunteer can make to education.

We are convinced that interested, enthusiastic, and productive volunteers do serve a purpose in the over-all educational scheme. It is interesting to note that most of the large city school systems now have full-time volunteer coordinators, and have instigated broad and varied programs dependent upon volunteers.

In 1966, the American Federation of Teachers issued a policy statement regarding lay volunteer assistance.

> ***That . . . there is a place for lay volunteer assistance within the school setting; the use of these volunteers must be restricted to those activities approved by the teacher, and under no circumstances must a teacher be forced to use or supervise a lay person. ...that the direction, control and responsibility for the educational process must rest firmly with the teacher.***

According to the National Commission of Teacher Education and Professional Standards, 1966 Newsletter:

> ***The use of auxiliary personnel could be one of the most significant advances in education in the past 50 years. The National TEPS Commission sees the addition of auxiliary personnel in the schools as one of the most challenging and at the same time, one of the most hopeful advances in modern education . . .***

The PACE Association has utilized volunteers in a variety of ways since its organization in 1963. It would be difficult to give a precise figure of the number of volunteers who have been active in school-oriented projects in the past five years, but we have consciously sought to enlist the aid of thousands of Greater Clevelanders in the constant press for quality education.

Over 1500 high school students have participated in Tutor Corps during the summer. These young people worked with over 6000 elementary school children needing personal attention in basic skill subjects. In some instances, they were assigned to a specific teacher and aided her during the summer school sessions.

Adult volunteers have been active in Pre-School Kindergartens, in Right to Read, a program for adult illiterates, in organizing and fund-raising for elementary school libraries, and many other vital areas, including the ERA program.

The advantages to the school system are countless. The development of community relations is one of the most obvious benefits – the more citizen involvement in education, the greater the awareness of the job being done. An unforeseen, but logical outgrowth of the ERA program was the increased awareness on the part of the volunteers of the enormity of the task confronting the classroom teacher, and a growing respect for the job being done in the schools. This type of public relations pays off handsomely when levy or bond issues are on the ballot. Those who are aware of the schools needs by first-hand observation are most likely to be avid supporters of the schools.

The trained volunteers, and we stress the necessity for training volunteers, can relieve the classroom teacher in many areas, but the unique opportunity to work with one child has far-reaching consequences.

While the teacher may recognize and classify the individual needs and wish to service them, there are just so many hours in the day. Those youngsters who cannot compete in the large classroom atmosphere, the shy introverted child, the child with singular personality traits, the one who lacks self-confidence – these are the ones who perform well in a one-to-one relationship. The ability of a "loving friend", who accepts the child for what he is, to adapt to the needs of the individual often tips the scales toward a successful learning experience.

Interesting ideas or concepts can attract innovative persons, involve them productively and creatively, and provide invaluable assistance to education. The volunteer must be appraised of her worth and desireability – she must herself be convinced that she can make a worthwhile and meaningful contribution to education and to one child in particular. Then, and only then, she will become involved. Her personal commitment, and this does require a commitment, will be in direct ratio to her orientation and her understanding of her role.

Ideals that motivate citizens to volunteer for services are as varied as the volunteers themselves. Many have defined interests in specific areas of activity, while others are caught up in the sheer excitement projected by a program. It is important to recognize these attitudes and evaluate them accordingly. Some will come to a tutoring situation with pre-conceived ideas of how the schools should be run, and personally assured that they have the solution to all the problems that beset education. Others will volunteer because of a love for children, an interest in a particular area of study, or for a purely altruistic need to serve. All can be accepted and utilized according to the abilities they bring with them, and their willingness to work within a well-defined structure.

With the knowledge that most classroom teachers do not have the time to devote to individualized help, and the conviction that non-certified personnel can be trained for a meaningful and significant contribution to education, PACE designed the Early Reading Assistance program.

CHAPTER III

ERA-I SUMMARY

Early Reading Assistance (ERA) is a tutorial program designed to provide reading assistance, by trained adult volunteers, to elementary school children with reading difficulties.

Devised and conducted by The PACE Association, (Program for Action by Citizens in Education), and funded by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, ERA-I was limited experimental project in 17 Cleveland Public Schools in the Spring semester of 1966-67. As a result of a statistical and a subjective evaluation of the program, and the recognized need for some additional help for children in reading, ERA-II was proposed. ERA-II incorporated the basic structure of the original program, but was modified in keeping with the recommendations of the evaluation, and was expanded to include suburban districts who wished to participate.

A summary of ERA-I will lead to a broad discussion of the ERA-II program, its structure, organization, volunteer recruitment and training, and the implementation of the program.

The need for some form of reading assistance, as summarized in the introduction to this discussion, was obvious. ERA was designed to play a significant role in reading education, with implications for further development in other fields of educational activity.

The use of volunteers in education has become an accepted reality, but much of the volunteer effort has been directed toward library aid, clerical help, and lunchroom and playground supervision. Teachers aides are employed in some systems, mainly to grade papers and to assist the classroom teacher in project work. The use of volunteers, trained and supervised for a specific educational task, has not previously been widespread.

On the predication that volunteers could be trained to provide meaningful assistance, on a limited basis, ERA-I was organized.

The Project Director, Dr. Tina Thoburn, with an extensive backgound in educational research, curriculum development, classroom teaching, and teacher training, structured the program along guidelines designated by The PACE Association, in conjunction with the Elementary Education Director and the Language Arts Supervisor of the Cleveland Public Schools. The Cleveland Board of Education assumed responsibility for informing the principals and teachers of the program.

The ERA staff was implemented by 4 experienced classroom teachers, whose function was to assist in the training of the volunteers, and a learning consultant who dealt with one specific phase of the program, the use of tangible reinforcements.

Once the organizational structure for the program was finalized, a recruitment and public relations campaign was launched. Through use of radio and TV announcements, releases to the major daily papers and the suburban weeklies, and contact with PTA's, women's groups, and other community organizations, the story of ERA and the need for volunteers was told.

There were no specific educational requirements drawn up for the volunteer – rather the concept of love of children, and the ability to establish a healthy one-to-one relationship were the vital qualities we sought. This open-ended form of recruitment, and the time limitations

imposed, did not allow for individual screening of volunteers. Interviews were held with groups of 10 to 15 volunteers prior to the pre-service training. Though not as penetrating a device as an individual interview, these group sessions proved to be particularly enlightening as the volunteers reacted to one another and to the interviewers. These sessions were conducted by the Volunteer Coordinator of the Cleveland Board of Education and the recruitment director of the PACE staff.

The volunteers, representing a geographic cross-section of Cleveland and its suburbs, were mainly middle-aged, middle-class housewives with varied backgrounds. Though their motivations for tutoring were quite varied, they came to the program with great enthusiasm, and quickly developed great dedication to the children, the project, PACE, and the Cleveland Public Schools. They were assigned to a specific school, and the principal and classroom teachers made the individual student assignment. In this initial phase, 86 tutors worked with 86 beginning second graders.

ERA was patterned to provide two (2) hours per week of individualized instruction for each child for a period of 13 weeks. The children were selected by the classroom teacher according to criteria drawn up by the PACE-ERA staff. This criteria will be discussed in the organizational section of this discussion.

In order for the tutors to be prepared to provide meaningful and productive help, a schedule of pre-service and in-service training was set up. All tutors participated in two 2-hour pre-service training sessions, and met weekly for in-service training. These meetings were held at a central geographic location, thus causing some of the tutors to come quite a distance. The entire schedule and site for the training sessions for ERA-II were changed as you will note in later discussion.

The role of the volunteer in the school was emphasized at the initial session, and the relation of the volunteer to the school was outlined. The volunteers were apprised of their role in the educational process – that of "friends" to the children and assistants to the teacher. Their basic function, that of reinforcing the classroom work, was stressed. The volunteers were provided with tools and materials pertinent to the reading program in the schools, and were shown ways and means of using them to the best advantage of the children.

The in-service sessions quickly became a clearing-house for the exchange of ideas, problems, and solutions. New materials were introduced from time to time, in order for the tutor to keep abreast of the needs of the child. Many of the tutors devised original and ingenious methods of stimulating the children with materials geared to the specific interests of the children. The tutors were encouraged to meet regularly with the classroom teachers in order to tailor the tutoring to the specific needs of the children. Daily logs were an integral part of the equipment of the tutors, and provided much information to the schools and the ERA staff.

Scheduling of the tutoring sessions was quite strict, and here again you will note modification in the ERA-II program. In ERA-I, the sessions were held the last period of the day, not always the most productive learning time, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, this at the request of the Board of Education. The building principals were asked to provide a room or a private area for each tutor and child. Space limitations were a deterrent to the number of volunteers that could be assigned to a specific school.

A system of tangible reinforcement was incorporated into the program, based on the hypothesis that immediate reward, in the form of toys, games, books, and fruit, could stimulate learning, along with natural and social reinforcement. The learning consultant demonstrated

this tool to the tutors, and supervised the application of the technique. The rewards were not administered haphazardly, but rather only for special achievements. In some schools, however, principals objected to the use of rewards, so that the group was divided into those using tangible rewards, those using social reinforcement, and some presenting small gifts at the conclusion of the program.

This phase of the project was dropped from ERA-II, since no significant differences were obvious among the children in the various categories. This is not to say, however, that the use of rewards for successful learning experiences was not of value – many of the tutors logs indicated that some children were persuaded to maintain interest only due to the gifts they earned. The statistical evidence would indicate that the individual tutoring itself was reward enough.

In adapting the ERA program for schools in disadvantaged areas, where the one-to-one relationship could be most effective, much thought should be given to reinstating the tangible reward system. The deletion of this factor in ERA-II was in part due to the fact that ERA was not held in Title I schools, but rather in the peripheral schools of Cleveland. This was a policy decision of the Cleveland Board of Education due to the preponderance of Federally funded programs in the Title I schools.

The socio-economic make-up of the schools involved, being upper-lower, lower-middle, or middle class, some negro, some white, and some integrated, contributed to the lack of necessity for the tangible reinforcement. Were the ERA program to be adapted for disadvantaged areas, the concept of rewards must be thoughtfully considered.

The cooperation of school personnel was vital to success, and in all cases was forthcoming. When the principals and teachers were fully acquainted with the program and its goals, and realized that the tutoring sessions were not a form of reward or punishment for the children, their reactions were extremely positive and enthusiastic.

Statistical Evaluation

In order to clarify the statistical evaluation, it is important to understand the direction given the tutors. The primary purpose was to reinforce the work of the classroom teacher, and not to exceed the rate of the other children in the same classroom. The tutors were asked specifically to work on word lists supplied by the Cleveland Board of Education, and not to deal extensively with phonics training.

As a result, the tutors devised many techniques to drill in work recognition, such as word games, charts, etc. Thus the development of work attack skills and word recognition exercises were the bulk of the tutoring sessions. It is not surprising then that the greatest gains were in word knowledge. The tutors had been requested to emphasize this aspect of reading instruction.

To measure and assess changes in reading achievement in ERA, a testing program was employed. The Metropolitan Achievement Test, Primary I (2 forms) was given to all children in the classrooms containing tutored children. Thus, a control group and a tutor group, matched as well as possible, were established. Both groups were tested before and after the program. Charts of test results are in the Appendix.

Although there was no significant difference between the two groups in reading comprehension, there was a statistically significant improvement on the part of the tutored group in word knowledge. In measuring changes in attitudes, we found a statistically significant im-

provement on the part of the tutored group in the desire to read aloud. The one-to-one relationship must be crditied for this added confidence-gain by the tutored children.

The subjective data indicates a successful program. It is the result of questionnaires returned by the principals, teachers, and tutors. All 17 of the participating principals were enthusiastic about the results. There were no negative comments about the value of the program, though a few questioned the use of the tangible rewards. They were most impressed with the quality of the training the tutors received, as indicated by: "A satisfaction to have such competent volunteers help the children," and "Come back again next year in larger numbers," and "Highly satisfied, welcome the return of the program."

The questionnaire given the classroom teachers was designed to show the teacher's reaction to the program, and if the volunteers were capable of effecting changes in reading performance. 82% of the teachers believed that the children improved in word knowledge; 83% noted improvement in oral reading; 68% felt that the tutored children improved in reading comprehension; and 100% assured us that the children were eager for their tutoring sessions. The motivation given by the one-to-one relationship was held to be the most influential factor.

The volunteer tutors were uniformly enthusiastic about the ERA program. Over 78% reported their working relationship with school personnel as being "especially good," 86% felt the training sessions were both necessary and more than adequate, and 100% felt the tutoring to be one of the most rewarding experiences they had yet encountered.

The PACE Association conducted this experimental phase of the program on a Jennings Foundation grant of $12,700, or $141.00 per child. This is high! However, Phase II of the program was conducted at less than $49.00 per child.

It must be understood that PACE is an "outside" agency, not part of any school district, but rather a non-profit citizens organization with a dedication to quality education. Therefore, the budget included the cost of hiring a director and staff to handle the ERA Program. An individual school system would be able to do such a volunteer project with a minimal financial expenditure, using its own resources and manpower for administration and supervision. The Elementary Curriculum Director or the Reading Consultant could coordinate activities and organize the program, with the additional services of the classroom teachers for training and supervision. Recruitment could be handled by the PTA, a community organization, or a citizens committee formed for this specific purpose. In this case, the financial outlay need only include materials and supplies.

ERA-II

In the Fall of 1967, a modified and expanded program, ERA II, was proposed by The PACE Association to be offered to suburban and private schools, as well as the Cleveland Public Schools.

The modification involved were those which developed from the evaluation of ERA-I, and the studied judgment of PACE and the ERA staff. The Jennings Foundation again saw the merit of the program and funded it on a projected budget of $17,500. This larger sum of money was necessary due to the expansion of the program into more school districts, and the inclusion of larger numbers of volunteers and children.

The modifications incorporated into ERA-II will be broadly discussed in the chapters on project organization. You will note that emphasis is placed on the necessity for advanced internal organization on the part of the school district before discussions with volunteers,

parents, or pupils. It is important that the project will have received the approval and agreement of the participating building principals and classroom teachers, and that they are convinced of the merit of the program. Without this acceptance of the principle of the value of trained volunteers, the project will have built-in negative aspects.

As you have previously noted, the use of tangible rewards was not to be an integral part of the program. Rather that this device, as a teaching tool, might be of some use in isolated circumstances as a last resort to motivate exceptional cases.

The training schedule for volunteers was not as productive as one would wish. It was the concensus that two full days of pre-service training, approximately five (5) hours each day, would serve the tutors and the children to a better advantage. Three training sites, at strategic geographic locations, were established for ERA-II to give the volunteers an opportunity to work closer to home. The content of these sessions will be described in Chapter IV.

One of the detracting features of ERA-I, in the recruitment of volunteers, was the tight tutoring schedule. It was felt that some proceedure should be developed that would allow for maxium use of school facilities and tutoring sessions. Being able to allow the tutors to work at a time convenient for them in conjunction with the convenience of the school schedule would increase the number of volunteers willing to take part. With this in mind, each principal was asked to designate the times and days most convenient for the facilities and schedule. Thus we were able to reconcile the tutor and the school to a mutually desirable schedule.

With these recommendations and modifications, the ERA program was offered to suburban schools. Tne (10) school districts plus two (2) schools of the Catholic Diocese participated in ERA-II. As a result of the county-wide recruitment and publicizing campaign, over 360 children were helped in the program. Some districts accepted the project on a limited basis, while others had very large enrollments. Many were restricted in the scope of the program only by the number of volunteers available.

CHAPTER IV

IMPLEMENTING A READING TUTORIAL PROGRAM

The implementation of a volunteer tutoring program must be well-organized and structured. The following guide-lines are drawn from experience in the PACE Early Reading Assistance I and II programs, and result from recommendations made by the ERA staff, school administrators, classroom teachers, and volunteers. The recommendations should be considered in reference to the framework in which they will be used.

Section I – Factors to be considered in organizing a volunteer tutoring program.

1. What would you expect to accomplish by a volunteer tutoring program?

In the PACE-ERA programs, there were three major goals:

a. Improvement in reading skills.
b. Development of good attitudes toward reading.
c. Development of good self-concepts.

Objective and subjective evaluations indicated that gains were made in all of these areas, with the greatest noticeable improvements made in the attitudes and self-confidence of the children being tutored.

2. Are the principals and teachers interested in participating?

Experience has shown that for optimum effectiveness, the participation of both administration and teachers should be voluntary. A great amount of cooperation will be required so that those who entertain doubts about the value of volunteers should be given an opportunity to observe the program in action before becoming actively involved.

3. At what level should tutoring begin?

The PACE-ERA-I program was conducted with children just beginning second grade; the ERA-II program involved 2nd semester second graders. The majority of the teachers and volunteers in the two programs felt that a compromise between the two might be better. Thus tutoring would begin midway through the first semester of second grade. Such an arrangement allows time for the teacher to identify abilities and/or problems, and yet allows time for work on the problems before they become pronounced. The tutoring time can then be extended up to 10 additional weeks.

4. Should the program be introduced on a pilot basis?

If such a course is adopted, consideration should be given to at least two alternatives:

a. Program to be limited to a few schools with a heavy concentration of tutors.
b. Program to be set up with a few tutors in each school.

It is usually advisable to plan in such a way that more than one tutor is assigned to any one school. The tutors are then able to gain confidence from one another, and are able to work together in some of their planning.

5. *Who shall be in charge of various phases of the program?*

   a. Coordination of the program.
   b. Recruitment of the volunteers.
   c. Training of volunteers.
   d. Evaluation of the program

Section II – Factors to be considered in selecting children for a tutoring program.

1. Identification of the children to be tutored.

   Those who need help and can be expected to benefit from regularly scheduled tutoring sessions with trained volunteers on a on-to-one basis should be considered for the program. Children should be recommended for the program by the classroom teachers with the help of the principals and reading consultants. Criteria for the selection of pupils might include:

   Those who . . .

   a. Need aid in increasing sight vocabulary.
   b. Need aid in applying previously introduced word study skills.
   c. Need aid in developing comprehension skills.
   d. Need extra practice in oral reading.
   e. Need to build confidence in themselves and greater awareness of their current strengths in reading.

   Children with unusual emotional problems and those with severly limited mental capacity should not be included in this type of program, for they need the help of professionally trained personnel. It would be unfair to both the children and the volunteers to create a situation in which a successful working relationship cannot be quickly established.

2. Availability of volunteers.

   It is generally desireable to determine how many volunteers are needed before recruitment begins. It is also well to keep in mind that there will be a certain percentage of attrition between the sign-up time and the actual training time. It is better to over-recruit than just to meet a specific number and stop. This allows for some screening also.

   If the children are recommended for a tutoring program before the volunteer recruitment is complete, the teacher should indicate an order of priority to aid in the final selection of pupils.

3. Availability of tutoring space.

   A separate space should be provided for each pupil-volunteer pair. The space need not be large, but it should be relatively quiet and provide a maximum of privacy. Possibilities include a conference room, unused classroom, or a corner of the library. The back of the child's regular classroom is not conducive to building a good and rewarding tutoring relationship. By staggering the scheduling of the tutoring sessions, the same space may be utilized more than once.

4. Attitude of parents.

   Most parents will welcome the extra help being offered their children if they are aware of the need for such help and the nature of the tutoring program. On numerous occasions, we have had parents ask to have their children included – the number of children that can be helped is only limited by the number of volunteer tutors that can be recruited.

A sample letter, similar to those sent to parents by several school systems participating in the PACE-ERA programs, is included in the appendix. Several school principals preferred to contact the parents by telephone or during regularly scheduled conferences.

Section III – Recruitment of volunteers.

Volunteer recruitment should not begin until all plans for orientation and scheduling are completed. It is recommended that schools should have completed their internal organization for the program before the program is offered to the public. In this way, recruitment can be directed to a specific goal, this is, number of children to be tutored, facilities available, and how the volunteer can be used most effectively. This preliminary planning on the part of the program administrator can make the job of recruitment much more efficient and purposeful.

Recruitment of volunteers is a nebulous task . . . methods that work well in one instance may not be suitable for another. The character of the community will be a significant factor in the structure of your recruitment program. The first recommendation would be to know and assess your own school community . . . know its strengths and weaknessess, and know where to look for enthusiasm and dedication.

1. School policy on volunteers.

   If volunteers in a tutoring capacity have not been a part of the school structure previously, it might be well to formulate a policy regarding the use of volunteers in the school.

   Where do you want volunteers, and under what circumstances? Do you want volunteer parents in the same school their children attend? It would seem to be the prevailing attitude that volunteers do not work in their home school. This policy is particularly prevalent in large school districts, but is not always feasible in smaller districts. This is a decision that need not be a firm directive from the Board of Education, but rather left to the judgement of the individual building principals.

2. Who will be in charge of recruitment?

   It would seem wise to assign the job of recruitment of a non-administrative group, such as the PTA or a Citizens Committee set up for this specific purpose. The scope of your program will dictate how you can achieve the best results. Groups such as those mentioned would seem to be a prime source of cooperation.

3. Publicity and Public Relations.

   There are many ways of acquainting the public with a new and exciting program. However, there is no recruitment tool more worthwhile and effective than word-of-mouth. Personal recruitment, whether it be from someone who has volunteered before, or from principals or teachers, or from a community group with a knowledge of the program seems to be the first answer to a tough problem.

   However, a definite Public Relations schedule should be structured. The more knowledge of a program available, and the more people aware of its obvious value, the more effective will be the recruitment.

The success of your recruitment will be in direct ratio to the excitement generated by publicity. There are several avenues of communications to be explored. Among them are the daily newspapers, the suburban weeklies, School Newsletters, PTA Bulletins, and the communication media of your area, such as television and radio. Meetings with community organizations, such as Women's Clubs, Golden Age Clubs, Men's Clubs, JayCees, etc. prove

to be quite productive, since a presentation can be made and questions answered on the spot. Often a local service organization will wish to take on the volunteer program as one of its member projects.

It would appear that suburban weeklies are a prime source of publicity and help. Most of them do have an education editor who will be interested in an innovative school project. The presentation should emphasize the need for such a program, its desireability, how it can make a significant difference in education, and how it will be structured. It is important to stress the time commitment necessary, the amount of training necessary, the qualifications for volunteers, and where the program will be carried out. We have found that a definite schedule, with a beginning date and an ending date is most necessary in any promotional work about the program. Volunteers can then realize that they are being sought to serve for a specific length of time, not signing on forever.

It is important to stress the mutual benefits derived from such a volunteer program. The volunteers we have worked with have not only felt that they have been able to contribute in some way, large or small, to the development of a child, but have held the tutoring experience to be one of the most rewarding and significant endeavors they personally have had. Interviews with experienced tutors are a convenient and productive source of good publicity, and result in an upsurge of enlistment.

Not only are the communication media, television and radio, required by law to devote a certain percentage of time to public service, but most of the stations are anxious to work with public agencies, and schools in particular, for a worthy cause. Contact with the Public Affairs Directors of the stations will give you direction in preparing materials for the media. Radio spots must be short and punchy, and should be prepared for presentation in 20, 30 or 40 second segments. It is surprising how much can be said in such a short time, if it is presented in precise and understandable terms. The television spots also work on the same time segments, and the stations will prepare a slide for you if you have something graphic and meaningful and have designed a short script. In the PACE-ERA program, a local commentator gave a 5-minute editorial on the need for volunteers, and the response to this was outstanding.

A flyer from the school, carried home by the children, both elementary and high school, is an effective tool in recruiting. Parents are generally anxious to see what the child brings home, so you are assured of a wide-spread knowledge of the program.

4. Screening of volunteers.

It is well to consider some criteria for the selection of volunteers. A personal interview, or a group interview as used in ERA, would seem to be required. Thus the emotional stability of a prospective tutor can be judged, not necessarily professionally, but at least to some degree.

In the ERA programs, we establish no educational requirements, and volunteers came forward with varied backgrounds, ranging from some high school to graduate degrees. There would seem to be no significant difference in the performance and productivity based on previous educational experience. In fact, one of the most dramatic advancements was made by a child being tutored by a volunteer who had not graduated from high school, but who had great sensitivity and love for children. Working on a one-to-one basis allowed for the development of mutual respect, not based on the past, but on the possibilities for the future.

The school should reserve the right, however, to discontinue the services of any volun-

teer who does not work effectively with the child, with the school personnel, or within the structure of the program. It might be wise to accept the volunteers on a trial basis once they are apprised of what is expected of them.

Section IV – Factors to be considered in setting up a tutoring schedule.

1. *How long should the program last?*

The PACE-ERA programs were continued for 15 weeks. In some cases, this time appeared adequate. In others, the teachers and volunteers would have preferred an extended tutoring schedule. Much will depend on the goals of the program, just what you expect to accomplish with the trained volunteers, and also on the needs of the children involved.

2. *How long should each tutoring session last?*

The initial ERA sessions were scheduled for one-half hour. As mutual respect and working relations developed, the sessions were gradually extended to one hour. This longer period allowed for more diverse activities during the session. A time could be allotted for reacquaintance, for work, for reading aloud, and for applicable fun activities. Thus the longer period was felt to be of maximum benefit by both the teachers and the tutors.

3. *What time of day should tutoring sessions be held?*

For optimum effectiveness, it is recommended that tutoring sessions be held in the morning or early afternoon. Since the sessions are definitely work periods related to reading, consideration should be given to assigning part of the language arts time for this activity. As a general rule, young children are more receptive to learning at the earlier part of the school day, so this factor should also be considered.

4. *How many tutoring sessions each week? At what intervals?*

Two sessions per week seem to be desirable, both for the continuity of the program and for the availability of the tutors. One or two days between sessions is recommended. By spacing the tutoring times in this manner, the child is less likely to miss too mcuh of his classroom work.

5. *Availability of tutoring space?*

Some advance planning of space availability and utilization will aid greatly in scheduling tutoring sessions. By staggering the tutoring times, the areas that are available for use for tutoring can be used several times over each week by different sets of tutor-child pairs. Thus more children can be involved in the program with some advance planning of space requirements.

6. *Availability of Volunteers at desired times?*

A great amount of effort has to be expended in reconciling the schedules of the volunteers with the schedule of the classroom teacher. This is not an easy assignment. However, some elasticity in the time schedule will allow for much more volunteer participation, and, of course, many more children can be helped. Therefore, it is wise to work with the volunteers to establish mutually beneficial schedules. If each will bend a little, much will be accomplished.

Section V – What the volunteer should know about the school and school routines.

Since the volunteer should be accepted as part of the "school family," it is important

that she be apprised of the various functions and routines common to the school.

1. Where to check in on arrival at school. We would stress the importance of signing in at the school office, so that the principal is aware of all people in the building. This is also an effective method of keeping track of volunteer hours.
2. The location of the child's classroom. It is desireable that the volunteer tutor pick up the child for his tutoring session and then deliver him back to his classroom.
3. The location of the tutoring area.
4. The location of the library and/or materials center.
5. The location of rest rooms. (Both teacher's and children's)
6. What to do in case of fire drill.
7. The school calendar and list of special events that might interfere with the tutoring session.
8. How to get in touch with the child's teacher.
9. Who to call in case it is not possible to attend a scheduled tutoring session. Conversely, it is important that the school inform the tutor if the child is absent from school on a particular day, so that the tutor will not have to make a useless trip to the school.

Section VI – Information the tutor should have regarding the child to be tutored.

1. The child's specific reading difficulties.
2. The nature of the child's classroom program of reading instruction.
3. The child's background. Is he new to the school? Has he repeated a grade? What reading program has he had previously?
4. The child's health and attendance record. Does he have sight or hearing problems? Is he often absent from school due to illness? Does he have any allergies? Doe he have any speech problems?
5. The child's emotional and social make-up. Does he cry easily? Is he aggressive with classmates? Is he shy?

It is strongly recommended that arrangements be made for the volunteer tutor to observe the child in his classroom prior to beginning the tutoring sessions.

Section VII – Relationship between the volunteer and the teacher.

1. The proper role of the volunteer is as an assistant to the teacher, a helper who endeavors to support and reinforce the instructional program the teacher has selected for the child. The volunteer should be made aware of this role... what is expected of her, and what she may expect of the teacher and the school.

Following are some guidelines you may wish to establish with the volunteer:

a. The teacher is in charge of and responsible for the child's reading instruction. The volunteer can help the teacher achieves her goals by carrying out suggested tutoring activities.

b. The volunteer should keep confidential all information about the school and the child.
c. The volunteer should NOT contact the child's parents. It is the right and responsibility of the school to report to parents on the progress of the child.
d. The volunteer should be prepared to continue working even though she does not see tremendous improvement in a short time.

2. The teacher should be reassured that the volunteer is there to help her carry out the instructional program she has devised for the child. Her prerogatives will in no way be usurped.

The teacher should also be aware of a need to guide the volunteer in her work so that the program is maximally effective. Her guidance might include:

a. Discussing the child's reading problems and progress with the tutor.
b. Suggesting games and activities which will aid in the development of needed skills.
c. Suggesting specific reading materials (books, worksheets, devices) for use with the child.
d. Discussing the child's social and emotional growth with the tutor.
e. Giving the tutor an opportunity to observe the child in the classroom situation.

Section VIII – A training program for volunteers.

1. *Who will be in charge of the training program?*

Consideration should be given to reading supervisors and remedial reading teachers.

2. *Who will teach the training sessions?*

a. The PACE-ERA programs made use of top-notch retired teachers who had experience with first and second grade children. The knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm of these teachers created an educational and cooperative enviroment for volunteers. Due to their retired position, these teachers were available to help at times when a full-time employee could not be available.
b. The number of training teachers needed will, of course, depend upon the scope of the program and the number of volunteers involved. It is recommended that each teacher have between 12 and 20 volunteers in instructional groups. This size facilitates the communication of ideas as well as the promotion of individual help.

3. *Where should the training sessions be held?*

It is recommended that the sessions be held in a central location, such as the Board of Education, if more than one school is involved in the program. If the program is used on a pilot basis in one school only, the training should be conducted in that school.

4. *How should the training sessions be structured?*

It should be noted that the following suggestions pertain to "new" volunteers. The experienced volunteers would need only a refresher course.

a. *PRE-SERVICE SESSIONS*

In order to be more comprehensive, it is recommended that pre-service sessions be held over a two-day period. The PACE-ERA sessions were 4 to 5 hours in length each. The volunteers were given a booklet prepared by the staff consisting of outlines, sample work pages, suggested activities and word lists. Samples of these may be seen in the appendix. The areas to be considered for these sessions are as follows: *(see sample program)*

1. Role of the volunteer in the school. It is imperative to warn the volunteer not to expect "miracles." The volunteer should be aware that progress is very hard to discern in a short period of time.
2. Characteristics of the "average" child in the grade or age level chosen for the program.
3. The use of an interest inventory. *(See appendix)* This is a good getting-acquainted exercise.
4. Role-playing by the teachers showing a tutoring session, emphasizing some of the characteristics of the child at the age level chosen for the program. Some of the problem areas the volunteers will meet can be shown effectively in a role playing situation.
5. Basic reading background at the primary level:
   (a). Sight word vocabulary
   (b). Work analysis skills
   (c). Comprehension
   (d). Oral reading
6. Material preparation, by having the volunteers make a few devices to use as testing and learning activities meeting meeting the children. More specific materials should be prepared in the in-service sessions.

Some areas lend themselves to large-group discussions, but some instruction must be completed in small groups, such as 12 to 20, to give the volunteer more freedom to question and discuss the material.

A very important part of the pre-service training should consist of an observation in the classroom by the volunteer. This enables her to see the child with whom she will work in relation to his peer group.

b. *IN-SERVICE SESSIONS*

These sessions should be two hours in length on a monthly basis to give the volunteers progressive training during the program. The volunteer has a great need for continuous support. She needs a time to discuss problems and successes as well as a time to share ideas with others. (A word of caution is in order here. No single volunteer should be allowed to monopolize the entire discussion time.)

In order to have a more sequential program and as much rapport as possible m the group, it is suggested that the same training teacher work with the same group of volunteers throughout the program. The subject matter included in these sessions could be as follows:

1. First Session
   - (a). Talking time
   - (b). General review
   - (c). Comprehension
   - (d). Vowel rules
   - (e). Material preparation
2. Second Session
   - (a). Talking time
   - (b). Synonomous meaning
   - (c). Multiple meanings of words
   - (d). Words pronounced the same
   - (e). Contractions
   - (f). Word endings – Passive endings
   - (g). Material preparation
3. Third Session
   - (a). Talking time
   - (b). Continued exploration of reading ideas discussed in previous sessions.
   - (c). More individual help
   - (d). Material preparation
   - (e). Evaluation

5. What materials will the volunteers need?

a. Writing materials. The volunteer will need material for her own use in making worksheets, devices, etc., as well as materials for the child to use when writing stories or words. A chalk board and magic slate were found to be most helpful.

b. Books. These can be obtained from the school book supply, school library, or public library as the need indicates.

c. Worksheets. These should be prepared by the training teachers, classroom teachers, remedial teachers, or reading supervisors. The volunteers can adapt them to the needs of the child.

d. Games and learning devices. Classroom devices may be used, but it is generally more effective to have the volunteer make or acquire some materials different from those the child has been exposed to in the classroom. These devices can be suggested by the training teacher and made during the in-service sessions.

Section IX – Evaluation of a Tutoring Program.

1. Objective Testing.

You may wish to set up a formal objective testing program using matched samples and a pre-test post-test design. Such a testing program can yield valuable information about changes in reading achievement and/or attitude toward reading.

No formal objective testing program was employed in ERA-II. The majority of the participating schools had a schedule of testing proceedures that were extensive enough to give the desired information.

2. Subjective Evaluation.

You may want to make use of structured subjective evaluation of the various phases of the program. Samples of teacher and tutor questionnaires used in the ERA program are included in the appendix.

These questionnaires were very perceptive, and revealed thoughtful judgment of the program. The teachers and tutors were most complimentary of the program, and felt it should be continued in the school districts.

The teachers and principals all indicated that trained volunteers could effect changes in reading performance, noting particularly the value of the one-to-one relationship. Most felt that this particular feature of the ERA program was the key to its success. Many noted improvement on the part of the tutored children, particularly in the attitude toward reading, and attributed much to the quality of the training and materials the volunteers had received.

In turn, the volunteers were pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute, in a meaningful way, to education. Some felt more successful than others, though few saw "miracles", that is, instant reading ability.

Most did see the beginning of a desire on the part of the student to want to read and to become part of the reading group in the classroom. Many were the recipients of "fringe" benefits from the program, the most outstanding of which was the desire on the part of several of the volunteers to return to school themselves to seek teaching certification. This volunteer tutoring opportunity had convinced them of the need for more teachers and also of their own worth to the educational community.

The volunteers appraisal of the program, its structure, tutor-training, and the actual tutoring experience lent much to this presentation. The tutors were keenly aware that the experience was a two-way street... they not only gave, but, also received. As one of the ERA volunteers expressed it:

Confessions of an ERA Tutor

I began quite trepidated,
Came away exhilarated.
Ron may not be educated,
But now at least he's motivated.

CHAPTER V

LOOKING FORWARD

PACE is unashamedly proud of the ERA program. We regard it as a major breakthrough in the continuing course of quality education. We are convinced that this vital step in reading education must be taken at an early elementary level, before the youngster is defeated by his own inabilities and begins the downward spiral.

Early Reading Assistance is not the definitive solution to the problems involved in reading, but rather it is an example of how school and community can strive together toward a common goal, serving a common problem. We still see some things that could be done differently. We anticipate some new approaches which could be successful, and stand ready to test new techniques and to honestly evaluate our efforts.

The future of volunteer tutorial programs is unlimited, and ERA stands as an example of progressive thought and action. The program can be adapted to conform to the policies and procedures of any school district, and can also be useful in special help for other basic skills.

ERA has shown the participating school districts how to work with volunteers, how to train volunteers, how to recruit volunteers, how classroom teachers can be involved and aided by such a program, and how classroom techniques can be implemented in a tutorial situation. ERA represents the achievement of maximum educational leverage from a minimum of financial resources.

The PACE Association offers its assistance to any school district wishing to formulate such a program. The PACE-ERA staff will be available to consult with school administrators, reading consultants and teachers in an effort to promote this worthwhile program. Direct any inquiries to PACE, 518 The Arcade, Cleveland, Ohio 44114.

Early Reading Assistance is one partial answer to a large problem, and we are convinced that future students with reading difficulties will reap the benefits of this program.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF TUTORED AND CONTROL GROUPS ON GAIN IN READING ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES

Reading Achievement Test	Mean Standard Score Gain (Pre-Post) Tutored N = 58	Controls N = 58	Difference Between Mean Gains	Significance of Difference
1. Word Knowledge	7.05	4.60	+2.45	Significant
2. Word Discrimination	6.62	6.79	- 0.17	Not Significant
3. Reading	6.72	7.19	- 0.47	Not Significant

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF TUTORED AND CONTROL GROUPS ON ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AT END OF TUTORING PERIOD

Reading Attitude Test	Mean Raw Score Tutored N = 58	Controls N = 58	Difference Between Means	Statistical Significance of Difference
1. Liking for Reading	11.36	11.68	- 0.32	Not Significant
2. Confidence in Reading	6.45	5.89	+ 0.56	Not Significant
3. Preference for Reading Aloud	6.03	5.33	+ 0.70	Significant

TABLE 3

CLASSROOM TEACHER REPORTS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGES AS A RESULT OF TUTORING

Behavior	Type of Change	Percent of Children Tutored In Whom Change is Reported
Oral Reading	Improved	83%
	No Change	17%
Reading Comprehension	Improved	68%
	No Change	32%
Word Knowledge	Improved	82%
	No Change	18%
Attitude Toward Teacher	More Positive	44%
	No Change	56%
Attitude Toward Classmates	More Positive	32%
	No Change	68%
Attitude Toward Tutoring	Eager	100%
	Reluctant	0%
Cooperative in Classroom	More Cooperation	45%
	No Change	55%
Attention in Classroom	More Attention	47%
	No Change	49%
	Less Attention	04%

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING WORKSHOP

First Day	
9:30 – 10:00	Registration and Coffee Hour
10:00 – 10:30	Orientation Welcome – School Official Introduction of training staff Workshop Schedule explained
10:30 – 12:00	Role of Volunteer Tutor in the Schools "Characteristics of Second Grade Child." Getting Acquainted – How to use Interest Inventory
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch
12:45 – 1:30	"How to Succeed, or It May Be Trying" A role-playing presentation of a typical tutoring session.
1:30 – 2:30	Small Group Sessions What is Reading? Sight Word Vocabulary.
Second Day	
9:30 – 12:00	Small Group Sessions Word Analysis Comprehension Oral Reading
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch
12:45 – 2:30	Small Group Sessions Materials Preparation Selection of Reading Materials

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____

In cooperation with The PACE Association, we are launching in our school an Early Reading Assistance Program to aid second graders who need strengthening in their reading skills. Volunteer tutors will be trained to work with selected children on a one-to-one basis to reinforce their classroom instruction.

A similar program was conducted in the Cleveland School System last spring. Test results showed that the children who participated in the program improved substantially in word recognition skills, in oral reading, and in their attitude toward reading. Principals, teachers, and parents were equally enthusiastic about the program which was funded by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation.

I am pleased to inform you that your son (daughter) _____ has been chosen as an ERA scholar. He (she) will meet with his (her) tutor twice a week during school hours to receive additional help in reading.

We welcome this opportunity to provide special help for your children at no extra cost to the school system or to you and hope that you will feel the same. Should you care to discuss the program in relation to your child, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

School Principal

INTEREST INVENTORY

The following Interest Inventory is intended to help establish rapport between the tutor and the child and to help the tutor understand the problems and attitude of the child. The tutor can develop and extend the interests the child indicates in the interview through the kind of experiences she plans and the materials she selects. If a child shows a general lack of interests he needs to be helped and to develop some.

The Inventory should be administered in an informal way. The questions need not be asked in the order given but all should be included in the interviews. Rephrase the questions, if necessary, so that they are easily understood by the child. Some children will talk freely; others may need to be encouraged by additional questions related to the topic under discussion. You may want to jot down points of particular interest or importance, but don't try, at the time of the interview, to write down everything the child says. You can fill in the form more completely at a later time.

1. What is your name? (Be sure child knows tutor's name.)
2. Where do you live? (House, apartment, trailer, etc.)
3. Who lives at your house?
4. Do you have a pet? If not, what would you like to have?
5. With whom do you like to play?
6. What games do you play?
7. Do you like to watch television? What are your favorite programs?
8. Have you ever been to a movie? With whom did you go?
9. Have you ever visited a museum? Which one? Have you ever visited the Aquarium?
10. Have you ever ridden on a bus? plane? train? rapid?
11. What would you like to be when you grow up?
12. Do you like to have someone read stories to you?
13. Do Mother and Dad like to read? What do they read?
14. Do you know why you have been chosen to come and spend some time with me?
15. Do you know why it is important to learn to read?
16. What is the hardest part of reading?
17. Do you like to read? What is your favorite story? book? poem?
18. Do you ever go to the library? Have you ever taken a book home?
19. Do you have any books of your own at home? Which ones?

Additional Information:

ERA PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. What part of the 2-day Pre-Service Training Workshop did you find most helpful?

   What part did you find least helpful

   How could the Pre-Service Training be improved?

2. How many of the monthly In-Service Training Sessions did you attend? _____

   Who was your training teacher? _____

   What part of the monthly In-Service Training Sessions did you find most helpful?

   What part did you find least helpful?

   How could the In-Service Training be improved?

3. Which of the volunteer materials you received did you find most helpful?

   Were there any you felt you could do without?

   Were there other materials you wish you had received?

4. Please comment on your working relationship with the school personnel.

5. Please comment on your working relationship with your child.

6. How long do you think the tutoring sessions should last?

   30 minutes _____ 45 minutes _____ 1 hour _____

7. Would you volunteer to tutor again? _____

8. What suggestions do you have for recruiting volunteers?

9. Additional comments, impressions, and suggestions:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE ERA PROGRAM.

TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

Name _____ **School** _____

Number of children from your room being tutored in ERA _____

1. **Do you feel that volunteer tutors are capable of effecting changes in the reading performance of young children with reading problems?** _____

2. **Do you think the second semester of the second grade is the appropriate time to begin tutoring? If no, when would you begin** _____?

3. **How long do think tutoring sessions should last?**

   30 minutes _____ **45 minutes** _____ **1 hour** _____

4. **Do you think 15 weeks of tutoring is:**

   too short _____ **just right** _____ **too long** _____

5. **Please comment on your working relationship with the tutor(s).** _____

6. **Do you feel the volunteers in the present ERA program were adequately trained?** _____

7. **Do you feel the classroom teacher should be involved in the training of the volunteers?** _____

8. **Additional comments and/or suggestions:**